

CLAIMS

What is claimed:

- 1 1. A method of determining the geographic locations of Internet users,
2 comprising:
3 receiving one of an IP address or domain name associated with an Internet user;
4 determining a geographic address of an entity that owns the IP address;
5 obtaining a route through the Internet to a target host for the IP address;
6 deriving a geographic location of any intermediate hosts contained within the route
7 through the Internet to the target host;
8 analyzing the route and the geographic locations of any intermediate hosts;
9 determining the geographic location of the Internet user; and
10 storing the geographic location of the Internet user in a database along with the
11 geographic locations of a plurality of other Internet users.
- 1 2. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the receiving one of the IP address
2 or the domain name comprises receiving both the IP address and the domain name and the
3 method further comprises verifying that the IP address corresponds to the domain name.
- 1 3. The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the verifying comprises
2 performing an nslookup on one of the IP address or domain name.

1 4. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the determining comprises
2 performing a whois for the IP address.

1 5. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising checking whether the
2 target host is on-line prior to determining the geographic address.

1 6. The method as set forth in claim 5, wherein the checking comprises
2 performing a ping.

1 7. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the obtaining of the route through
2 the Internet comprises performing a traceroute.

1 8. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the analyzing of the route
2 comprises mapping the route to geographic locations stored in a database.

1 9. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising assigning a confidence
2 level to the geographic location of the Internet user.

1 10. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the determining of the geographic
2 location includes analyzing the domain name for the geographic location.

1 11. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising confirming the
2 geographic location of the Internet user.

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1 12. A method of providing geographic locations of Internet users to requestors,
2 comprising:
3 collecting geographic locations on a plurality of Internet users and storing the
4 geographic locations in a database;
5 receiving a query from a requestor for the geographic location of a particular Internet
6 user, the query containing at least one of an IP address or a domain name for the particular
7 Internet user;
8 determining whether the geographic location of that particular Internet user is
9 available in the database;
10 if the geographic location is available in the database, delivering the geographic
11 location on that particular Internet user to the requestor.

1 13. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein if the geographic location is not
2 available in the database, the method further comprises determining the geographic location
3 of the particular Internet user and storing the geographic location in the database.

1 14. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein the determining whether the
2 geographic location is available in the database comprises sending a query to a remote
3 database.

1 15. The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein the determining whether the
2 geographic location is available in the database comprises sending a query to a local

3 database.

1 16. The method as set forth in claim 12, further comprising selectively delivering
2 information to the Internet user based on the geographic location of the Internet user.

1 17. The method as set forth in claim 12, further comprising selectively redirecting
2 the Internet user based on the geographic location.

1 18. A method of tracking the behavior of Internet users based on their activities on
2 the Internet, comprising:

3 obtaining geographic locations of a plurality of Internet users and storing the
4 geographic locations in a database;

5 receiving queries from requestors for the geographic locations of a particular Internet
6 user;

7 delivering the geographic location for that particular Internet user to the requestors;

8 tracking the requestors associated with that particular Internet user; and

9 determining the behavior of the particular Internet user based on the associated
10 requestors.

1 19. The method as set forth in claim 18, further comprising determining the
2 geographic locations of the plurality of Internet users.

1 20. The method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the determining of the behavior

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2 comprises generating a profile for that particular Internet user.

1 21. A method of determining a geographic location of an Internet user that
2 accesses the Internet through a caching proxy server, comprising:
3 embedding an identifiable tag in a web page to form a tagged web page;
4 in response to the Internet user requesting the web page and receiving a request for the
5 web page from the caching proxy server, transmitting the tagged web page to the Internet
6 user through the proxy server;
7 opening a direct connection with the Internet user;
8 communicating with the Internet user through the direct connection;
9 receiving the identifiable tag from the Internet user;
10 obtaining an IP address for the Internet user from use of the identifiable tag; and
11 determining the geographic location of the Internet user.

1 22. The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the embedding comprises tagging
2 the web page with a Java applet.

1 23. The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the identifiable tag comprises a
2 unique applet parameter tag.

1 24. The method as set forth in claim 21, further comprising marking the web page
2 as uncachable.

1 25. The method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the opening of the direct
2 connection comprises accepting the direct connection through a port.

1 26. A method of determining a geographic location of an IP address on the
2 Internet, comprising:
3 obtaining an access number for an Internet Service Provider;
4 connecting to the Internet Service Provider through the access number;
5 determining an IP address provided by the Internet Service Provider;
6 determining a route through the Internet;
7 determining a geographic location of at least one point of presence for the Internet
8 Service Provider by analyzing the route; and
9 determining the geographic location of the IP address based on the geographic
10 location of the point of presence for the Internet Service Provider.

1 27. The method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the obtaining of the access
2 number comprises obtaining a dial-up number for the Internet Service Provider.

1 28. The method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the determining of the route
2 comprises performing a *traceroute*.

1 29. The method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising storing the geographic
2 location of the IP address.

1 30. A method for permitting information to be selectively delivered to Internet
2 users, comprising:
3 compiling information on a plurality of Internet users and obtaining data related to the
4 Internet users;
5 storing the information and data related to the plurality of Internet users in at least one
6 database;
7 receiving a query from a requestor regarding a particular Internet user;
8 retrieving the data associated with that particular Internet user; and
9 transmitting the data to the requestor;
10 wherein the data permits the requestor to select desired content for that particular
11 Internet user from a plurality of possible choices of possible content and to deliver the
12 desired content to that particular Internet user.

1 31. The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a geography
2 database and the data relates to geographic locations of the Internet users.

1 32. The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is an authorization
2 database and the data relates to the desired content the particular Internet user is authorized to
3 receive.

1 33. The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a network speed
2 database and the data relates to a down-load rate for the particular Internet user.

1 34. The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is a profile database
2 and the data relates to a profile of the particular Internet user.

1 35. The method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the database is an interface
2 database and the data relates to an interface of the particular Internet user.

1 36. A method of determining a geographic location of an Internet user that
2 accesses the Internet through a caching proxy server, comprising:
3 associating a Java applet with a web page;
4 in response to the Internet user requesting the web page and receiving a request for the
5 web page from the caching proxy server, transmitting the web page and associated Java
6 applet to the Internet user through the proxy server;
7 opening a direct connection with the Internet user;
8 communicating with the Internet user through the direct connection;
9 obtaining an IP address for the Internet user; and
10 determining the geographic location of the Internet user.